

I think we are here because we want to make a difference. I have no doubt that is the case for my 99 colleagues here on the Senate floor, but it is also true for all the folks who work here in the Senate Chamber, who work in our individual offices, and who work in the committees. The goal is to be in the Nation's Capital in the hope that we can make better things happen for America. I have had the privilege of being surrounded by many dedicated individuals—most of them Kansans—over the period of time that I have served in the Congress of the United States of America. I know that my ability to work on behalf of Kansans and on behalf of the citizens of our Nation is greatly altered and improved by the fact that people who care about America, who care about our home State, are there by my side. One of those most important to me has been my chief of staff.

Todd was an elected official in his own right. He was elected to the Kansas House of Representatives and served there with distinction. Twelve years ago, back in the days when I was a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I asked him to uproot his family and move to Washington, DC, and assume the task of managing our office and helping accomplish the things that we all wanted to accomplish. He has done it with great style and with grace and with friendship. He has been the person who has motivated us to do better and has always done it in a way in which we felt good about what we were doing, in a management style that made us feel good about ourselves, bringing us together, not taking us apart, making certain we knew that the outcome was important, but how we got there—matters that are important to us as individuals, as human beings with integrity, doing things right, telling the truth—those things were always honored and achieved because of his leadership.

People are hard to replace, and Todd is especially difficult to replace. I spend almost every week in the Nation's Capital, away from my own family. Like many people here in the Senate, those who work in our offices become part of our family. That is certainly true with the people who work in my office today. I feel that, although when I came to Congress I was more their age, now there is a significantly wider gap in the age of our staff and me. But my wife and I believe that I am surrounded by people who are part of our family, and Todd is certainly that. In fact, his family grew while he was my chief of staff. His two children, Grace and Will, were born during the days of his time as an employee in our office. Again, as a reminder about how to put things in perspective, he was always taking care of his kids. He was always there for their school activities, part of the school board, involved in their athletic and musical activities. That is a good thing for a chief of staff to know because if it is important to

him, he will make certain that his commitment is permitted, honored, and encouraged by those who work in the office.

So tonight, I just want to say thank you to Todd Novascone from Hanover, KS, who decided to devote 12 years of his life here in the Nation's Capital, trying to make things better, trying to make our office work well, and trying to achieve the things all of us want to achieve for our Nation. So, Todd Novascone, thank you for a job well done, thank you for being my friend, and thank you for the way you have conducted yourself on my behalf.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I have one more role to undertake this evening.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JAMES H. "JIM" SKAGGS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of James H. "Jim" Skaggs, a Louisville resident, who passed away in December at the age of 94. To his family, his church community, and to those who knew him, Jim was a man known for his kindness, patience, and compassion. As a member of this Nation's Greatest Generation, he was an example of commitment and devotion.

Like so many other brave men and women, Jim answered his country's call in the Second World War. Kentucky has a proud history of military service, and Jim is a fine model of that tradition. As a staff sergeant in the 755th Railway Battalion, U.S. Army Transportation Corps in England, France, and Belgium, Jim showed the deep passion he held for his country.

Jim leaves behind a legacy of love and family. His daughter Debbie is my personal friend and archivist. If it is possible to measure a father by his daughter, Jim will surpass all standards. She is impressive in her own right, and she is surely a reflection of him. He will be remembered fondly. Elaine and I send our deepest condolences to Jim's family and friends.

REMEMBERING ROBERT L. "BOB" WILLIAMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a good friend and a true Kentucky hero, Robert L. "Bob" Williams. Bob, a northern

Kentucky native, passed away in December at the age of 94. He left behind many loved ones, including his wife, Barbara, but he also left his mark on our Nation and the Commonwealth.

As a member of the Greatest Generation, Bob answered the call of duty and bravely served in World War II. On June 6, 1944, he was one of the first Allied paratroopers to land during the D-day invasion. With his fellow soldiers, Bob fought well behind enemy lines before the beach battle began. His mission to secure roads and bridges was vital to the success of the entire operation.

With uncommon courage, Bob and his comrades completed their dangerous mission, overcoming enemy fire and capturing the crucial junctures. Once the invasion began, they continued their fight joining the largest amphibious assault in world history. Without faltering, Bob heroically battled for 10 more days, before suffering a serious injury on June 16, 1944.

It is without question that Bob's actions during the war displayed the highest possible valor. But his actions after the war proved his dedication to those who lost their lives on the battlefield. He spent his life after the War commemorating those who served in any way possible. If there was a parade to march in, you can be sure that Bob marched in it. To remember the 50th anniversary of the D-day invasion, Bob joined other veterans and parachuted into Normandy again. In an interview with the Lexington Herald-Leader, Bob remembered "[t]he government said, 'There's no way we're going to let you do that, you're all too old.' [. . .] We did it anyway."

The following week, TIME magazine published a double-page, full color picture of Bob. Triumphant walking away from his 1994 jump with dozens of parachutes still gliding behind him, Bob looked overjoyed. He was paying tribute to his comrades, those with him on that day and those who were not.

To further honor those with whom he served, Bob wrote a book to share veterans' stories of the war for future generations. He has impacted countless lives and is someone I very much respect and admire.

In 2013, it was my privilege to recommend Bob for admission to the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame. This honor was a recognition of something I already knew well: Bob exemplifies the highest American values of service, self-sacrifice, and heroism.

Bob's family represents the greatest of Kentucky values with kindness, compassion, and charity. It was easy to see the love between Bob and his wife, Barbara, and they raised wonderful children in Barbara, Diane, Jeffrey, Kim, and Kevin. Although they endure the pain of loss, I know they are comforted in the memory of Bob's deep love for all of them.

My wife, Elaine, and I were deeply saddened to hear the news of Bob's